United Nations A/HRC/31/NGO/89

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 February 2016

English only

Human Rights Council
Thirty-first session
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by the Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 February 2016]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.16-02491(E)

Please recycle

The Syrian displaced refugees in Kurdistan Iraq region need to be under urgent consideration of the human rights council

For years, residents of the Middle East countries have been the compulsory witnesses of different wars, including regional conflicts, civil wars and terrorist attacks. One of the suffered groups of the consequences of such conflicts is civilians and residents of the cities in the region that the war zones have been expanded into their geographical location. These civilians have been given two options, either to remain in the war zones or being displaced. Each of these choices brings its own toughness in the life of the mentioned people. One of the suffered groups of civil wars is Syrian refugee families who are wandering in a dreadful situation on the streets of Kurdistan Iraq region in Erbil city.

Based on the observations of Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society NGO in December 2015 in the region, especially in Erbil, currently many Syrian refugees are adrift in plight on the streets without the primitive facilities of living. According to these people and the observations, the number of displaced families wandering is numerous. In a case study carried out in December 2015 by the researchers of IAPSRS NGO, only on "Havalan street", one of the streets in Erbil city, 80 Syrian families were recognized and recorded during a two-days mission of identification by walking survey, focus group discussion and observation methods.

The recognized families were living in handmade inappropriate tents on the streets in the city. This community with 390 members was forced to inhibit in deep deprivation with no primitive facilities for life. Many of the residents were ignored in plight of unemployment and deep poverty. Some were even compelled to send their children peddling on the streets. Some of the families were living in too weak nutritional status and their children were suffering from malnutrition. They all had no standard, safe and secure shelter. Their status of hygiene and health were severely unfavorable. The families and their children were settling in deprivation of having warm clothes and heating appliances on the cold weather of the winter. Due to problems caused by cold weather in the winters of the past few years, a considerable number of children of the displaced families have been suffering from diseases; and now they face heavy costs for the treatment which could not be afforded by the refugees.

Although, in respect to the appreciated efforts of Kurdistan Iraq regional government and supports of international organizations some huge camps for IDPs and refugees have been established to settle them; the numerous number of evacuees afflicted of extensive war are exceeded the capacity of the camps. Therefore, so many Syrian refugees have not been able to register in official camps and have been wandering on the streets for more than three years. The mentioned families abandoned their homes in "Halab" and "Deir ez-Zor" cities in Syria. Although, the identities of the observed evacuees have been recorded by UNHCR as refugees; they have received negligible supports by international organizations and were living in the condition of extreme poverty and the consequences which affected their life. Meanwhile, in many cases, the recognized families were involved in distress providing their daily subsistence. As a result, some children and women in these families were begging to make money for their daily food. Due to the current situation of their life, the families were experiencing a sense of frustration and deep despair. The extremely harsh environment they were confronting, were detrimental to their psychological and spiritual status.

Children of these families had no educational support and the majority of them were deprived of education. Among the studied population, 91 out of school children were identified out of 121 children in school age. Based on the observations, obstacles of educational deprivation of the children could be alleviated through financial support and establishment of Arabic-language schools.

Besides, pointed out children were deprived of the rights of happiness and playing because they lived in areas where did not have access to any kinds of recreational facilities and joyful atmosphere. This issue caused mental and emotional trauma among children. Undoubtedly, it will affect their lives in the future.
At the time, to support the human rights of the referring refugees' emergency condition it is required to take the following actions:

1. Kurdistan Iraq regional government as the political sovereignty of the area that the Syrian evacuees settled in, should be demanded to prepare an accurate comprehensive report on the situation and present it to the

Council. For providing the report, it is strongly recommended to benefit the assistance of active NGOs in the region.

2. Relying on the report by Kurdistan Iraq regional government to the Council, the necessary actions should take into considerations immediately in order to accommodate displaced Syrians in the available camps or establish a new camp for them. It should be noted that the establishment of new camps, requires necessary supports by the international community to the regional government. In this regard it is highly emphasized that the experiences of NGOs can come into practice.
3. Due to inappropriate living conditions the of children in the noted group from educational deprivation to inaccessibility of adequate food, clothes and recreational opportunities, irreparable consequences in the future may affect the personal and social life of the children. Therefore, the special attention of the council to this issue is demanded.